

DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers. Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U.S.A.-Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

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NICK CARTER WEEKLY-NOS. 91 AND 92

By Harold C. Holmes

The first 227 numbers of Nick Carter Weekly were the small size issues, yet among them were published 4 issues which were large size. In no other Street & Smith publications were any large size issues sandwiched in with the small size. I first began to read novels about May, 1899. This was about seven months after these four large sized Nicks were published. But the nickels were so scarce for me, that I never could begin to buy all that were published then, and my favorites of those days-Work and Win-and Diamond Dick, Jr., got such nickels as I got hold of. So the Nicks I gave scant attention to when with a nickel or dime, I grubbed thru the mountain-like piles of novels for sale secondhand in every cigar store. Probably that is why I never remember seeing or hearing of those four large size issues until 35 years later, in the fall of last year. Then, our friend, Ray Caldwell, told me of the four issues, and to say I was surprised, is putting it mildly. Nos. 91, 92, 93, 94 were advertised as large size issues. I know that 91-92-and 93 are large size and I know that 95 is the regular small size again. I do not know whether 94 was really issued large size or not, but it was advertised as such, No back * issue list from 95 on, ever mentioned these

larger issues. I think I have enough so that I think perhaps a description of two of them, might be of interest.

NICK CARTER WEEKLY 91: The size is as the old Nick Carter Library, $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. The top three inches is the old familiar Library heading. Nick in various disguises. The words Nick Carter Weekly, are in red, and Nick in his disguises in blue and white. Next comes the date-line. No. 91, Sept. 24, 1898. The next lower two inches is the title which did not run over on to the picture. Nick Carter in Harness, or The Stolen Safe Combination. Then came the picture, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7$. The picture is a fine one, too, in colors and one of the kind I like, showing scenes of the old days. This is a livingroom of the "Gay 90's". At the front, on the left, you see a corner of a felt topped desk, and lying on it, is a soft hat, a black half-mask, and a dagger. The artist wanted you to know that this was a detective story, and after seeing that layout, if one was still in doubt he must be indeed a half-wit. In back of the desk was a window at which hung the old-time frilly lace curtains. In the left corner of the room was a spindly stand on which stood a big vase with the always present rubber plant of that decade. A bit to the right is the doorway to the dining room into which you can see a little. The doorway is hung with red portieres. I'll bet you remember them, boys. The fat brass rod running across the top of the doorway and the brass rings with the clips at the bottom which slid along the rod. To the right again, you see an instrument of torture; a straightback chair nice enough for the front room. A wooden seat with the inner part of cane, cunningly designed so that you could sit on neither wood nor cane, but must sit on part of each, resulting in your anatomy being molded into a distinct hill and valley. To the right again

you see part of an ornamental fireplace. The brick of the fireplace and around and above that, a carved wooden sideboard with the fireplace occupying its lower part. The upper being used for bric-a-brac and backed by an oval mirror. In front on the floor, is a bearskin rug. The floor is carpeted and the walls papered with a wide highly ornamented border at the top. In the right foreground, a man is aiming a pistol at the ceiling. In the left foreground, is Nick. He has a chair and one foot placed on the seat of it just about to spring up toward the ceiling. The chair is another of the old timers but one which was fairly comfortable, with a plush covered seat and back. Nick is in a business suit, but I pity him, for he is wearing one of the old stiff wing collars. Many the uncomfortable day I have spent, encased in one. A quick downward turn of your head and the point of the wing would pop a tonsil out of its socket. From the ceiling, a man's foot and leg to the knee, is thrust down where he has broken thru. The foot line says: "Nick sprang to the chair. He was just in time, the foot was being withdrawn from view."

The inside of the cover was blank. The next page (1) did not have the date or the number of the issue, but gave the title in big letters, and the publishers name and address. The story began at the top of page 3, and did the author put a punch into some of his chapter titles. Here are a few of them: Chapter 2-"Walled up Alive".-3-The Poisoned Satchel Handle.-6-The Needle Without an Eye-9-The Still Alarm-10-In the Nick of Time.

In this story, Nick has been out of harness for some months and has refused to take cases that Chick, Patsy and Ida could not handle. A poor laborer, a mason, comes to Nick's house, seeking his aid. The man is frantic with fear and tells Nick that he

has committed a murder. John Cherry, the mason, said he had been seated outside his house the previous night, when two men approached him in a cab and said they would give him \$10.00 for two hours masonry work, that night. He accepts and they take him into the cab and drive away, only to blindfold him, so he did not know where he went. Then in a house somewhere, he was at a pistol's point forced to build up a wall imprisoning in a living tomb, a young girl who was chained in a little space, screaming for mercy as he worked. He was then drugged and delivered back to his home. Nick questions Cherry further and finds that when he was on the way to Nick's house, he was stopped near his home, by a veiled woman who asked a street direction and he held her satchel while she searched in her pocket-book for the address. Nick examines Cherry's hand in which he had held the satchel, as it has begun to swell badly and turn a purple color. They find a row of tiny pin pricks in the palm. Poison had been administered thru the satchel. Nick gets a doctor who says he has been called in time and that he will be able to counteract the poison.

Nick sends his assistants out to try and trace the veiled woman. Ida was the successful one and traced her to a cheap hotel near the city hall. She notifies Nick who, with Patsy, joins Ida at this hotel, in a room adjoining that which their quarry had taken. Nick looks thru the transom and discovers the supposed woman is a man in disguise. When he looked again in a few minutes, the man had disappeared. Nick slides thru the transom into the room, and going to the open window, finds a fire-escape. The man was not in sight which proved he must have gone up the shorter distance to the roof. Nick and Patsy go up on the roof and see the man they were after, do an astonishing thing.

he ran to a high flagpole which was on the roof and climbed to its top. His weight, when he reached the top, tore the flagpole from its bolted position and it fell to the roof of another building across a narrow court. Nick crossed this perilous bridge, seizes the man, and gets him back to his room for questioning. The man admitted he knew about the girl who was walled up alive, but refuses to talk. Nick tells him that he knows he is a drug fiend and that a period without his drug, would make him talk plenty. With that, the man eludes Nick and dives to his death on the pavement 60 feet below. Among the effects of the dead man, they find an envelope with the return address on it, of a Mr. Winfield Clarke.

Nick goes to the home of Mr. Clarke and finds him a wealthy lawyer. He has one daughter who is at present away at the seashore. Nick examines his safe and finds it has been tampered with altho Mr. Clarke says none of its contents appear to be missing. Nick is not satisfied, and examining some of the envelopes which had held securities belonging to his clients, finds their contents have been taken and blank paper substituted. A very heavy money loss. Just at that instant a crash came and a section of the ceiling caved in and a man's foot and leg is extended into the room. Nick springs on a chair and grasps the foot, but the man's shoe comes off and he withdraws his leg. Nick and Mr. Clarke rush up into the attic, but the man has escaped.

Nick sends to the hotel where Mr. Clarke's daughter has been staying, only to have them reply that she had left for home two days before. Nick takes a photograph of the girl to John Cherry, the stone mason, and as Nick feared, Cherry recognized the picture as that

of the girl who was walled up alive.

When Nick had gone into the home of Mr. Clarke, he had left Chick on guard outside and when Chick had seen a man come out of that house wearing only one shoe, he was suspicious and followed him to a big brick house near the river. That night, Nick and Chick effect an entrance into this house. They find their quarry there but he sets the house on fire and gets out, runs to the river and tries to escape by swimming, but is run down by a motor boat and killed.

Nick goes back to the building which was on fire and on which the firemen were now working. He searches it and finds the newly made wall in one of the rooms. He breaks it down and finds Miss Clarke, still alive. She had come upon the robber working on the safe at her home, and they had walled her up, to silence her.

THE END.

The first four chapters were printed in the size of type used in the regular Nick Carter's, but from Chapter 5 on, it was in very small type. The story ended in the middle of page 16, and the rest of the page has the familiar OUR NEW PREMIUM WARGRAPH OF THE BATTLE OF MANILA with the usual coupon. The bottom line was MAKE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF DIAMOND DICK, JR. The inside of the back cover was blank. The outside of the back cover had the back issue list. It gave the heading THIRTY-TWO PAGE EDITIONS and listed the numbers from 44 to 90 SIXTEEN PAGE EDITIONS and listed Nos. 91-92-93. One unusual thing about this issue is that the number and date appear only once and that was on the outside cover, so if you happened to have a "no cover" copy, you would not know what number novel you had, unless you traced it by its title.

NICK CARTER 92: The setup of this number is exactly the same as No.91, with of course a different date, October 1, 1898, and the different title: AN ATTEMPT TO BUNCO NICK CARTER, or, BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE. The picture is a fine one of the oldtime scenes. It shows a corner saloon of the old days. The floor of this saloon is depressed from the street level, the depth of three steps and these steps are laid in a part circle affording equal ease of descent from any part of the corner. It is summer and the doors are wide open and you can see the bar inside and three customers, each wearing a derby hat and one of them standing with his right leg thrown across the left and the foot resting on the right toe, which was the pose showing the height of nonchalance in those days. One of the men at the bar is rather disreputable in appearance. A tough looking negro had just come down the steps and is about to enter. On the sidewalk at the extreme left, is a dude, in a sack suit, carrying a natty cane, wearing a straw hat with a red band, has a cute little mustache, a high choker collar and (WOW) a bright red necktie. On the pavement at the corner, looking into the saloon, stands a rather poorly dressed woman, with an apron on over her dress, and carries a baby hugged in her arms, and a little girl clings to her skirts beside her. Coming up the steps with a big pitcher of beer, is a ragged urchin. Over the door is hung a heavy iron frame which holds the gas light. The right background is of the street which has in sight, one of the gas lights shedding its yellow rays over the nearly deserted street, there being only one pedestrian and one small horse vehicle in sight.

A very interesting little picture and as you read the story you find the poor looking

man in the saloon is Nick, the negro is Chick, and the urchin is Patsy. When you hear the story of this number, I think you are going to get a surprise. I know that I did when I read it. I just told you about No.91 and in that you know Ida was in her usual place, working as the assistant to Nick. Well, in No.92, Ida is introduced to the readers of Nick Carter. Makes her first appearance, so there is only one thing to conclude and that is, that these numbers have been issued before and that No.92 was an earlier number than the other.

The story opens with Patsy telling Nick there is a ldy to see him in his reception room. Nick goes in and a beautiful young lady introduces herself as Miss Ida Jones and says she seeks employment and wishes to become a detective. She said she has read that the greengoods men have been active lately, and there is something in her past life which she doesn't wish to tell at present, which makes her think she would be useful in running down these gangs. Just then Patsy calls Nick. In twenty minutes he returns and tells Ida he has just been retained on a green-goods case where the man had been swindled out of \$20,000. Nick says he does not beleive it is true, and thinks the man has some other purpose in coming there. Nick said he was going to give Ida a trial and told her to go out on this case and find out what she could and report in 24 hours, and that upon her report, would hinge her employment.

At about this same time, Chick was walking thru 28th Street and saw ahead of him, Lazy Larry, whom he knew to be a member of a green-goods gang. Lazy Larry went into a Chinese laundry and soon came out with a bundle and went on to near the corner of 26th and 9th Ave., entered anghther laundry and soon

came out with a second bundle. Then Chick followed him to 7th Ave and 13th St. where he went into a third laundry and came out with no bundles. Chick then went home and as he went up the steps, a heavily-veiled woman came out. Nick explained to Nick, of Ida's visit.

Ida wasn't supposed to be back for 24 hours, but she was back in two hours and she had important news. When she left the house, she had noticed an arrow drawn on the steps. She went in that direction and soon found another arrow. Following on, she was at length led to a house on Great Jones St., near the Bowery. Ida had a male disguise on under her dress and she went in a hall, slipped out of the dress and appeared as a man. Ida had a cousin names Rita Jones who had gone wild and was mixed up with criminals. This Rita and Ida resemble each other very much and as Ida watches the house, a member of the gang comes along the sidewalk and speaks to Ida. He has seen she is disguised and thinks she is Rita. Ida knocks him unconscious with a blow from a revolver butt and gets him into a cab and has brought him to Nick Carter's house.

Nick has the unconscious man brought in. When he is revived he thinks Rita has betrayed him and led on by skillful questioning by Nick, he admits a crime as follows: A man named Henderson, a very rich man who resides in Winnipeg, is a brother of Ida's mother. This man, knowing that Ida's father and mother are dead, hired a private detective to locate Ida, so he could take care of her. This private detective, Dawson, is a crook and he hatched a scheme to do away with Ida and to substitute Rita for her and trim this Henderson of his money. They had, as they thought, stabbed Ida and thrown her body in the river. The crook beleives murder has been done and

does not know that Ida is alive, and when Nick says he may let him escape to Australia in return for the crook's help in capturing the gang, the crook eagerly accepts the terms.

Nick arranges his plans to let the green-goods plot go thru, and then capture the whole gang. At the Grand Central, Nick, Ida, and Patsy see Rita meet Peter Henderson as he got off the train, and so they know the plot is on. They overhear that the crooks are to meet at a saloon run by a man named Schneider at 10.30 P.M., and so all the Carters are there in disguise. (The scene in the picture cover, and by the way, the woman in the picture I described, is Rita.) The conspirators gather in this saloon and arrange their final plans, but when they try to carry them out, Nick gathers them all in. Rita is stricken with a brain stroke and died in three days. Peter Henderson is overjoyed to meet his real niece, Ida, and wants her to come at once to Winnipeg to live with him, and he will make her his heir, but Ida's reply is: "No, uncle, my work is here for the present. In a year or two perhaps, when you need me, I will come, but for the present I remain here as Nick Carter's lady assistant."

THE END.

That was a fine story, boys, and I sure got a kick out of reading the story of Ida's introduction to the pages of Nick Carter. The story ended near the top of page 16. Then came back issues listing from 72 to 92 and altho we know 91 and 92 were large size issues, this back issue list did not specify them as such. The bottom of page 16 was the usual WAR-GRAVE OF THE BATTLE OF MANILA. The back page was a back issue list, which said 32 Page Editions, and listed 44 thru 90 and 16 PAGE EDITIONS and listed 91-92-93. In the

first part of the series, I said there were four large size issues, but I can't swear to that as 91, 92, and 93 are the only ones so listed in the numbers I have seen, but I think 94 was also a large one and that the small ones started again with No. 95.

I hope you boys have enjoyed hearing of these two rather rare issues and very much wish that someone who owns a copy of Secret Service No. 1, would write a description of the picture and the story for us, and send it to Ralph Cummings. I knew many of us would very much like to read such an article.

Members of the Happy Hours Brotherhood will be sadly distressed to learn of the misfortune which befell our Honorary Member, Major Gordon W. Lillie, in the loss of his wife on Sept. 17th in an auto accident. Our good Friend, Pawnee Bill also sustained injuries, the extent of which is not stated in the newspaper account.

In 1885, Major Lillie and Buffalo Bill presented their famous Wild West Show in Philadelphia, at which time he made the acquaintance of May M. Manning. It was love at first sight and they were married soon after. Major Lillie taught his pretty bride to ride and shoot so that she was transformed into a real western cowgirl. Old-timers will recall her exhibitions of breaking targets thrown into the air, while riding a horse at full gallop, from a side-saddle.

Major and Mrs. Lillie celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary last August in Taos, N.M. at the Indian Pueblo.

Coupled with our feeling of sincere sympathy in the loss of his dear wife, are our hopes that his injuries are not of a serious nature.

NOTE FOR ROUNDUP.

It is a matter of record that Mrs. Ann S. Stephens was a renowned author of love stories, notwithstanding the fact she penned the first yellow-back Beadle's Dime Novel, entitled "Malaeska, the Indian Bride of the White Hunter." Among her novels were: "The Wife's Secret" - "The Rejected Wife" - "Fashion and Famine" - "The Heiress" - "The Old Homestead" - and "Mary Derwent". All these novels were published by T.B. Petersen & Bros., 306 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. This publishing company also ran several series of highwaymen tales featuring: John A. Murrell - Joseph T. Haro - Dick Turpin - Nat Blake - Jack Rann - Jack Shepard - Johnathan Wild - Jack Ketch - Kit Clayton - Dick Parker - Sixteen String Jack - Rody the Reverend - and Guy Fawkes.

We are sorry to hear of the discontinuance of the Happy Hours Magazine. A magazine that we all will miss, and we hope Ralph Smith sees his way clear to print it again, for it is a shame to have to give up the sponge, after printing all these years.

W.L. Jackson, Myra, Maine., ex-member of the H.H.B., way back in 1926, died at his home early in the spring, so we are told. A fine trader, was he, honest and true blue. May his soul rest in peace, for he will live in our kindly memories. (THE H.H. BROTHERHOOD).

The ORIGINAL of which this is a Reprint, also carried various advertisements of many members of the Happy Hours Brotherhood, and others.